

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in this application.

**Listing of Claims:**

1-14. (canceled)

15. (previously presented) A method for removing contaminants from air in a sealed mail processing area, comprising:

providing a work surface at a predetermined height above a floor of said sealed mail processing area;

introducing an item of mail onto said work surface in the sealed mail processing area;

creating a downward flow of air within said sealed mail processing area, said downward flow of air transporting contaminants from said item of mail into an inlet of a vacuum unit which created said downward flow of air;

said downward flow of air traveling through said work surface disposed in said sealed mail processing area; and

filtering the air after said vacuum unit has caused the downward flow of air to pass through said work surface to remove said contaminants.

16. (previously presented) The method of claim 15, further comprising:  
assembling the sealed mail processing area.

17. (previously presented) The method of claim 15, wherein said sealed mail processing area includes an air inlet and an air outlet.

18. (previously presented) The method of claim 17, wherein said filtered air exits the air outlet of said sealed mail processing area.

19. (previously presented) The method of claim 17, wherein said sealed mail processing area has a modular construction.

20. (currently amended) ~~The method of claim 16, wherein said sealed mail processing area includes removable walls~~ A method for removing contaminants from air in a sealed mail processing area, comprising:

assembling the sealed mail processing area to include removable walls,

providing a work surface at a predetermined height above a floor of said sealed mail processing area;

introducing an item of mail onto said work surface in the sealed mail processing area;

creating a downward flow of air within said sealed mail processing area, said downward flow of air transporting contaminants from said item of mail into an inlet of a vacuum unit which created said downward flow of air;

said downward flow of air traveling through said work surface disposed in said sealed mail processing area; and

filtering the air after said vacuum unit has caused the downward flow of air to pass through said work surface to remove said contaminants.

21. (previously presented) The method of claim 20, wherein said sealed mail processing area includes at least one of a removable ceiling and a removable floor.

22. (previously presented) The method of claim 20, wherein said sealed mail processing area includes a removable ceiling and a removable floor.

23. (previously presented) The method of claim 20, wherein said sealed mail processing area has at least one transparent wall.

24. (previously presented) The method of claim 15, wherein:  
said work surface is a surface of a mail sorting table, the method further including positioning the inlet of said vacuum unit underneath said mail sorting table in said sealed mail processing area.

25. (currently amended) The method of claim 15, wherein said sealed mail processing area includes an intercom system, which allows a person outside said sealed mail processing area to communicate with a person inside said sealed mail processing area.

26. (currently amended) The method of claim 15, wherein said sealed mail processing area includes a warning device, which[[,]] provides an indication that said sealed mail processing area is in use.

27. (original) The method of claim 15, wherein said downward flow of air is a laminar air flow.

28. (currently amended) ~~The method of claim 15, wherein said filtering step includes:~~ A method for removing contaminants from air in a sealed mail processing area, comprising:

providing a work surface at a predetermined height above a floor of said sealed mail processing area;

introducing an item of mail onto said work surface in the sealed mail processing area;

creating a downward flow of air within said sealed mail processing area, said downward flow of air transporting contaminants from said item of mail into an inlet of a vacuum unit which created said downward flow of air;

said downward flow of air traveling through said work surface disposed in said sealed mail processing area; and

filtering the air after said vacuum unit has caused the downward flow of air to pass through said work surface to remove said contaminants, said filtering the air including

filtering particles within a first range of sizes from the air suctioned from said work surface; and

filtering particles within a second range of sizes from said filtered air, wherein said second range of sizes ~~[[is]]~~being smaller than said first range of sizes.

29. (previously presented) The method of claim 28, wherein said filtering step includes filtering chemical contaminates from the air suctioned from said work surface.

30. (previously presented) The method of claim 17, further comprising:

attaching an air lock room to said sealed mail processing area,

wherein said air inlet extends between said sealed mail processing area

and said air lock room, and wherein the air suctioned through said air inlet resides within said air lock room.

31. (previously presented) The method of claim 30, further comprising:

attaching another air inlet to said air lock room, wherein negative pressure created by said vacuum unit in said sealed mail processing area draws air into said sealed mail processing area through said another air inlet and said air inlet.

32. (original) The method of claim 31, further comprising:

another filter unit connected to said another air inlet, said another filter unit filtering air from an outside source.

33. (previously presented) The method of claim 15, further comprising:

providing a mail cleaning device in the sealed mail processing area, said mail cleaning device including a chamber having an air inlet and an air outlet, said air outlet connected to a vacuum unit and a filter, said vacuum unit suctioning air through said air inlet to create an air flow through said chamber; and

inserting the item of mail into the mail cleaning device.

34. (canceled)

35. (canceled)

36. (canceled)

37. (canceled)